Remarks

The above preliminary amendment is made to remove multiple dependency from claim 4. Claim 1 has also been amended to remove the term "characterizing" from it. No new matter has been added hereby.

Applicants note that such amendments were not made to overcome an art based rejection. Therefore, such amendments should not be construed in a limiting manner.

Applicants respectfully request that the preliminary amendment described herein be entered into the record prior to calculation of the filing fee and prior to examination and consideration of the above-identified application.

If a telephone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues concerning this communication, please contact Applicants' primary attorney-of record, John J. Gresens (Reg. No. 33,112), at (612) 371.5265.

23552
PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Respectfully submitted,

MERCHANT & GOULD P.C. P.O. Box 2903 Minneapolis, Minnesota 55402-0903 (612) 332-5300

Dated: June 3, 2005

hn J. Gresens

Røg. No. 3

JJG/acp